

A JOURNEY
to
BERESFORD HALL
THE SEAT OF
CHARLES COTTON ESQ.^R
THE CELEBRATED
ANGLER.

By W. Alexander F. S. A. & L. S.

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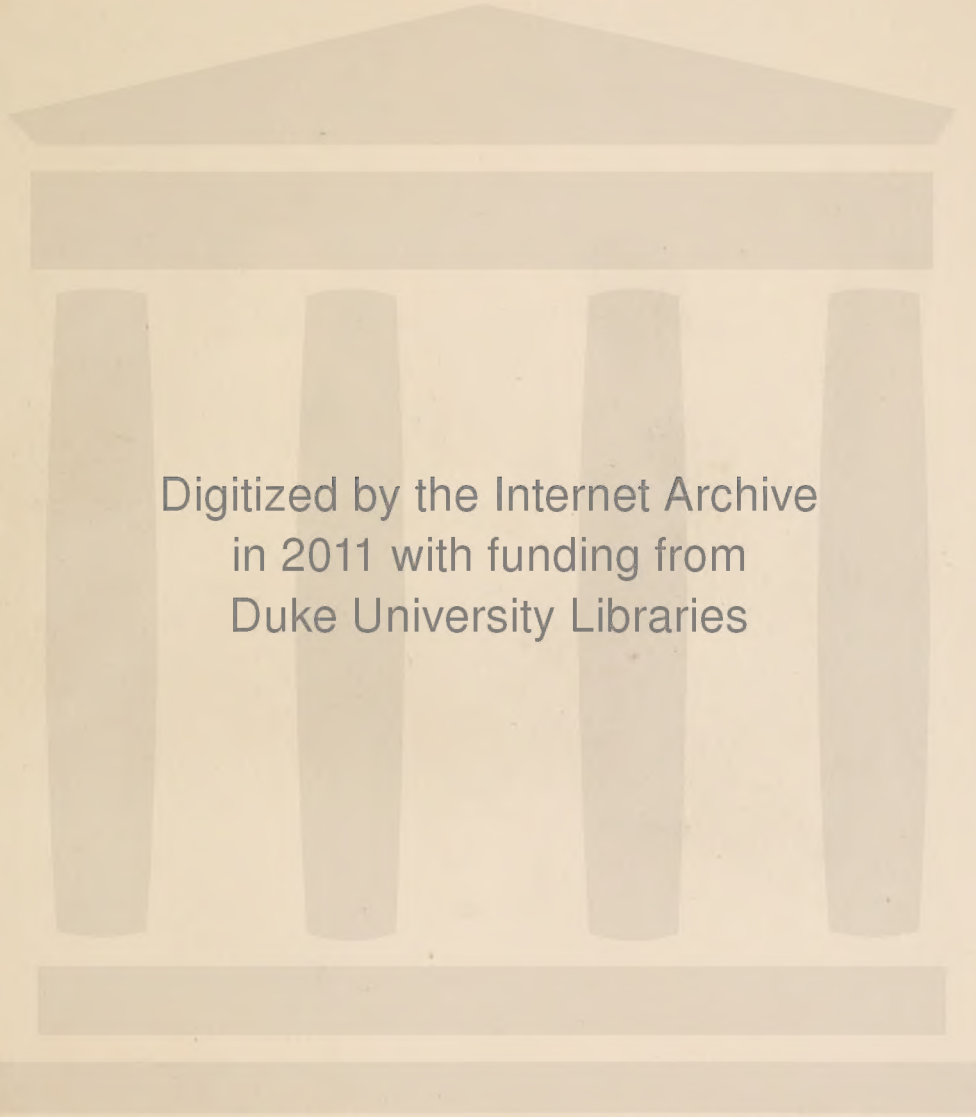
Treasure Room

227 $\frac{a}{v.1.2}$



ALEXANDER'S JOURNEY
to
BERESFORD HALL.

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421



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Me thinks I see Charles Cotton and his friend,
The modest Walton, from Augusta's Town,

Enter the Fishing House an hour to spend,
And by the marble table set them down.

A JOURNEY
TO
BERESFORD HALL

THE SEAT OF

CHARLES COTTON ESQ^{RE}.

THE CELEBRATED AUTHOR AND ANGLER.

BY W ALEXANDER F. S. A. and L. S.



"COMES JOCUNDUS IN VIA PRO VEHICULO EST"

Pub. Syr. Frag.

LONDON.

John Russell Smith,
4 Old Compton Street, Soho.

MDCCCXLI.

TO THE
ANGLERS OF GREAT BRITAIN,
and to the various
WALTON CLUBS,
THIS JOURNEY OF ALEXANDER'S

———— TO ————

^{??} BERESFORD HALL. ^{??}

———— is ————

humbly dedicated

———— BY ————

A BROTHER OF THE ANGLE.

London
Dec. 2nd 1837.

P R E F A C E .

A Journey to **BERESFORD-HALL**, the **SEAT** of **CHARLES COTTON ESQ^r** the celebrated **ANGLER !!!**

why what an irresistible Title!

BERESFORD-HALL! there is something so charming in its sound, that it cannot be described.

To an Angler, it is the **TALLY-HO**, of the **FOX-HUNTER**.
A soul stirring **NECK** and **NECK RACE**, to the **HORSE RACER**.
THE DOWN CHARGE, to the **CRACK SHOT**.

THE SOHO! to the **COURSER**.

THE RATTLING of the **RINGS** to the **FLY-FISHER**, or **TROLLER**.

Allowing all the joys these various sports command, where is one so lasting as that of the **PEACEFUL ANGLER?** the reflection charms and soothes the dullness of life, what Sport or 'as time but that of **ANGLING**, could rouse the torpid state of manhood at eighty-three? an age when we might expect the stoutest veteran to be "Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing." Is there one among the sportsmen above enumerated that would leave his fire side and easy chair and partake of the Joys of the **CHACE**, **THE RACE-GROUND**, **THE STUBBLE FIELD**, &c? I doubt it. However, here is **HONEST OLD IZAAK WALTON'S**, own words upon the subject.

"Though I be more than a hundred miles from you, & in the eighty-third year of my age, yet I will forye both, and next month begin a pilgrimage to see you."

Where to? why, **BERESFORD-HALL!** and the reader must observe this was written to his adopted son **COTTON**, in the year 1676, journeying into a country the most difficult & hazardous that can be conceived for an aged man to travel in, to see his friend, and doubtless to enjoy his favorite diversion of Angling in the delightful streams of the **DOVE**, carrying with him the best and choicest of all earthly blessings, a contemplative mind, and a cheerful disposition, an active and healthful body.

So beautiful did the scenery of this delightful spot appear to him, that, to use his own words, The pleasantness of the river, mountains, and meadows about it, cannot be described, unless Sir Philip Sidney, or **M^r COTTON'S** father were alive to do it.

MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

William Alexander, F.S.A. and L.S. was Born at Maidstone, April, 10th 1767, where his father, M^r Henry Alexander, followed the business of a coachmaker. A few of his earlier years were passed at the Grammar school of Maidstone, under the Rev^d Thomas Cherry, since Head Master of Merchant Taylors' school, in London; but in 1782, at the age of fifteen, he quitted his native town for the Metropolis, where he was sent for instruction as an Artist. He first studied drawing under M^r William Parr, of Fountain court, Strand; was afterwards placed with Ibbotson, the celebrated Land scape-painter, and Feb^y 27th 1784, became a student at the Royal Academy. In 1792, he was appointed Draughtsman of the Embassy to the Court of China; and accompanied the Earl of Macartney to Pekin, where he remain'd during the Journey to the Northern Frontier. He return'd with the other persons of the European suite in 1794, & in the following year married Miss Jane Wogan, a lady of a respectable family in Wales, whom he had the misfortune to lose within a short time after his marriage. In 1802, he received an appointment as Professor of Drawing at the newly formed Royal Military College at Great Marlow, which he quitted May 28th 1808. on being appointed Assistant Keeper of the Department of Antiquities in the British Museum.

The Drawings which accompanied Sir George Staunton's account of the Embassy to China, published in 1797, were almost exclusively from his pencil. In 1798, he published four plates of "Views of Headlands, Islands, &c, taken during the Voyage to China," amounting to fifty-three in number,



and in the same year completed the Drawings from M^r Daniel's sketches, which illustrated Captain Vancouver's Voyage to the North Pacific Ocean. The productions of his pencil also ornamented M^r Barrow's Travels in China, quarto, 1804, as well as that gentleman's Voyage to Cochin China, published in the year 1806. In 1805, M^r Alexander, published "The Costume of China, illustrated in forty eight coloured Engravings", in quarto, accompanied by explanatory descriptions of the Chinese Manners. This work was so well received by the Public, that he was encouraged to bring out another volume on the same subject, comprising a similar quantity of plates and letter-press. Three Volumes of Engravings from the Terra-Cottas and Marbles in the British Museum, were published in 1810, 1812, and 1815, by the Trustees, the Drawings of which were executed by M^r Alexander, and the Descriptions written by M^r Taylor Combe, the Keeper of the Department of Antiquities. Previous to his death, M^r Alexander, had completed the Drawings of a fourth volume. He died July 23rd 1816, of a brain fever at the house of his uncle at Rocky Hill, near Maidstone, in the county of Kent.

His remains were interred in the Church yard of Bexley, near Maidstone, July, 30th 1816. He was a man of mild and unassuming manners, rich in the knowledge of Art, and of unsullied integrity.

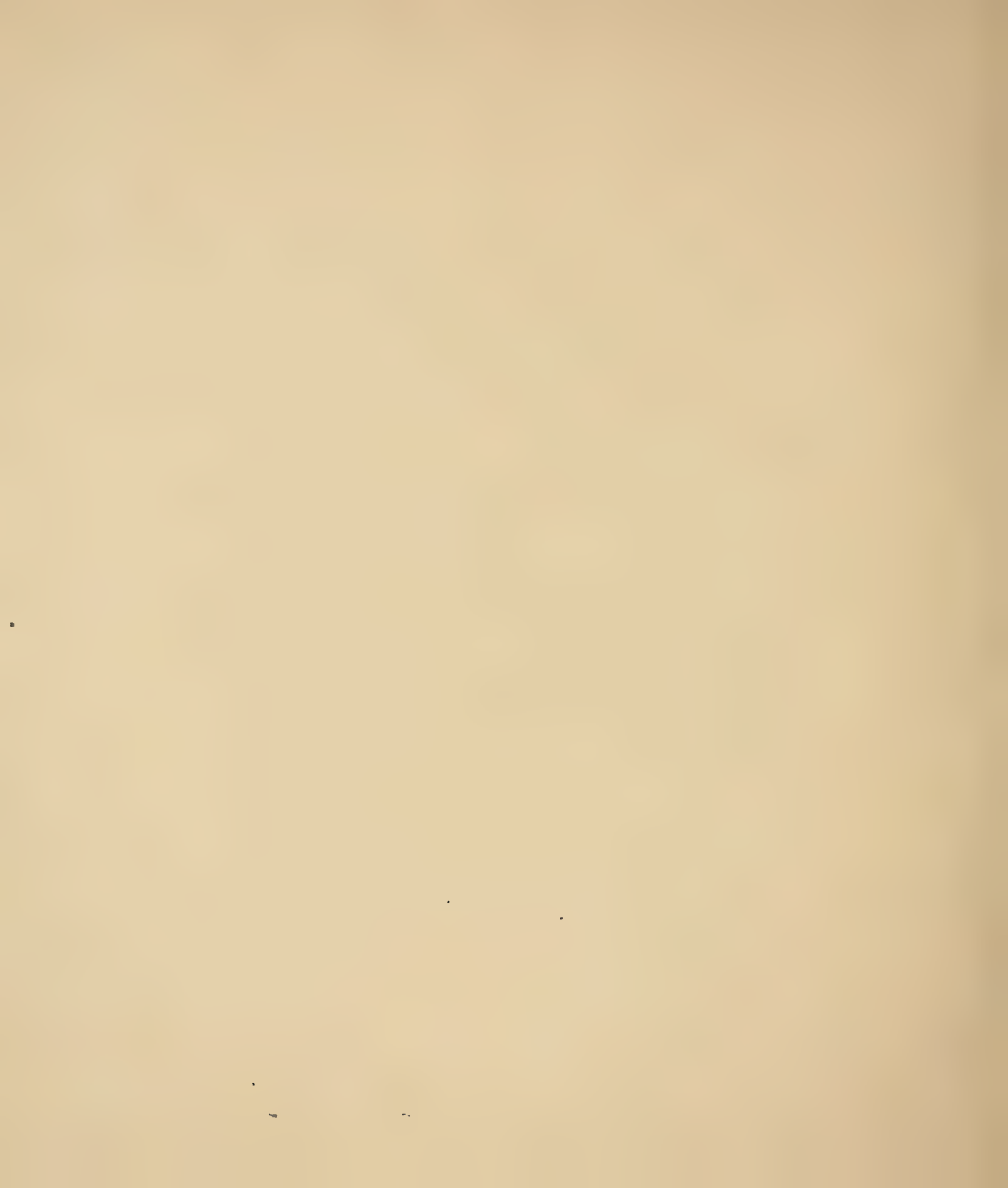
A Portrait of M^r Alexander, was drawn by H. Edridge, and Engraved by, C. Picart, but never was published.

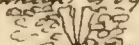
THE
HAND WRITING
OF ALEXANDER,
BUT VERY RARELY APPEARS
TO THE COLLECTOR OF AUTOGRAPHS,
WHICH IS A SUFFICIENT INDUCEMENT
FOR HAVING A FAC-SIMILE MADE
OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT,
THAT THE CURIOSITY
OF NO ONE MAY BE
DISAPPOINTED.



Mr. Eliza Conway

Saturday Sept. 6th 1815 at 8 A.M. left
London by the Royal Alexander Stage bound
to Manchester from the 3 Leaps Inn at Aldersgate
Street, by this conveyance we reached Leicester
at 10 P.M. where we slept at the Royal Inn
Next morning ^{Sept 10th} at 5 A.M. left Leicester by
the Telegraph (for Manchester) which we left
at Brailsford a village about 5 miles short
of Ashbourn. The Sandy hill & brook described
by Walton - what distance beyond Brailsford
does not produce a subject illustrative of
the letter ^{in Gostling's analysis} the scenery is beautiful.
Before entering Ashbourn we took the old Road
down Little hill which was discontinued about
40 years since ^{for the present, unimproved one} The view from this hill is highly
picturesque the town below & the hills ^{of Gostling's} forming the
Dove Dale make such a composition as I have
seen from the hands of Gaspar Poussin -
Monday 11. Rose at 6 and pursued our Journey towards
Dorridge or just from the summit of the hill is the
cavernity of the town saw the distant mountains of
those clouds bounding the river Dove bridge Dale
with narrow dale this view became mentioned by Walton
a slight sketch was made, at noon a bridge for the
Beauly Brook over which is the bridge noticed by



Cotton, the scenery being picturesque, a sketch was also made of this Bridge for the illustration of my copy of Walter Angler, containing our route a mile or two further we passed the Dog & Partridge which is used for refreshment by the visitors of Dove Dale, soon after the country assumes a more sterile aspect, the lands being divided by stone walls, the means of passing thro' which, is by the Derbyshire stile which is formed thus 

The scenery now makes a striking contrast with the exuberant vegetation in the neighbourhood of Appleton, continuing our route 2 or 3 miles through this kind of Arcadian country, we came upon Mill Dale and the River Dove, which with the small & narrow bridge described by Cotton, forms altogether a most interesting scene. We soon after came in sight of Bensford Hall which opened on us at the distance of about 2 miles, of this first appearance of Cotton's residence a slight sketch was made, and having soon afterwards reached this luxuriant spot so highly interesting not only from the Salvo-
-like subject, & romantic scenery of the River Dove which is the boundary of the domain eastward, but from having been the residence of so eminent a character as Charles Cotton Esq. soon after our arrival I commenced a sketch of the mansion in a nearer point of view.

Tuesday 12 had a Chaise from Ashbourne to Bensford Hall, the road to which is so rugged as to be nearly inaccessible by such conveyance, however after some difficulty we again reached & enjoyed the romantic beauties of this luxuriant - the now

neglected spot, Employed myself on sketching the Fishing House erected by Colton & making a view of Pike Pool, which takes its name from an insulate Rock or Pike which runs from the river to the height of about 30 feet. In a cleft of this rock opposite and very difficult of access is a natural Chamber, in which the facetious owner is said to have occasionally concealed himself from his Creditors -

Wednesday, 13th on our route to Beresford Hall we this day took the way through a pleasant village in which a good house inhabited by a Mrs. Russell & in this Church is a cross about 10 feet in height, the ornaments which are of the Saxon taste, are much obliterated, in the 3^d East Chancel is the ancient Font richly carved with animals & birds in the grotesque Norman style, this rich font is replaced by a modern ill designed vessel by no compliment to the taste of the parishioners. In this chancel is a tomb with Effigies of Robt. Newell & Ellyⁿ his wife whose daughter married Tho^s Lord Cromwell Viscount Leicestre, which Robt. died 1626. In the middle of this Chancel is also an ancient lid of a Coffin, which is covered by a cover or shroud perforated with quatered tradition gives it to one Bertram, & that it was formerly in the Church yard.

Thursday 14th Sailed forth early for Beresford making as ~~fast~~^{usual} our half way at Aldome where we ~~halted~~^{found} a good breakfast at the Black Lion - Pursuing our journey we soon came to Thorp Cloud, a conical mountain which

from this point intercepts the opening of the Dove
 The weather being delightful were gratified
 beyond expression by the grandeur & effect of the
 surrounding scenery, the subjects frequently reminding
 me of the productions of the Prometheus, Calisto &c.
 having entered & revelling among the luxuriant
 & romantic beauties of the dale we passed on
 the right a curious perforated arched rock, called
 Bernard's Hall, before which we halted five
 minutes till a sketch was made, at a short
 distance from this on the Staffordshire side of the
 dale, is an immense tall isolated rock which
 mixing with the luxuriant vegetation was a
 subject to be remembered hereafter by referring
 to the sketch — returned to our head quarters
 at Ashbourn in the Even'g —

Today 15th - Left our Inn the Green Man
 at Ashbourn early, on leaving the town we took
 the old road called Little Hill from which
 Cotton describes the view of Ashbourn which was
 sufficient reason to make a sketch, about 7
 miles (on our route) to Derby in Brailsford, where
 we breakfasted, & afterwards continued our
 journey (pedestrian) to Derby which we reached
 about 1 o'clock, having the advantage of a very
 fine day, the walk has been delightful —

Having dined at the Kings Head, at 1/2 past 2
 left Derby by the (London) Stage for Leicester
 which we reached at about 8 on the evening, on the
 here was the first & second where after the
 refreshment of tea we retired to bed on the

Saturday 16th after a collapse night from the
 name of Grooms, & a short time of stages after mid-
 past we called forth to see the inscription of this
 ancient city, one of these is a roman military
 stone with an inscription in which the name of
 Hadrian occurs, this relic has the addition of
 a modern pedestal and top & is surrounded by the
 enclosure of an iron railing - afterwards we
 crossed the River to see the remains of Leicester
 Abbey, entering from the circumstance of having
 afforded an asylum to the fallen king, who died
 here, having said the Doctor that he had come to
 see his bones among them" vide Historical Part 3.
 A sketch of course was made for the illustration
 of my copy of our immortal Part 3. Close to
 the Church of St. Nicholas is ^{an} ~~the~~ fragment of
 the ancient Roman wall, the arches are turned
 with Roman bricks with a mixture of stone.
 Leicester is in general an unpretentious, the houses
 being built of bricks of an ugly red colour.

At 10 A.M. we left Leicester by a Birmingham Stage which set us down at Coventry at 1/2 o'clock at the Crown Hotel where we found good Fare & good Bed, in the evening I visited Mr Sharpe a gentleman fond of Antiquarian pursuits. He has formed an extensive Collection of Materials for a History of this County. He would liberally allow the use of his collection to any person who would make a respectable & proper use of them. The next morning Sunday 17th we breakfasted with Mr. Sharpe, who again gratified us by the exhibition of an extensive collectⁿ for this his native City of Coventry - I must again speak of the liberality of Mr. S. who would lend his information to any one competent to make a proper use of his paper etc. we afterwards walked about the Town (perused the Traders gazed upon the buildings) saw the Churches of St. Michaels, & St. Mary. The former of these has a lofty Tower & Spire supported by flying buttresses which with the whole exterior of the body is highly enriched with statues &c. but we have to observe that the material being the soft red sand stone of the Country is of so mouldering a nature that scarcely any part is left in an uncorroded state for statues which adorn the Tower of St. Michaels should be executed of white marble. The Tower & Spire of the Grey Towers, is elegant but unlike some

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mutated state. Bullake Church has no
spire & the tower is not built from the stone of -
this country - The Guild hall called St Marys Hall
is again unfortunately of the red perishable stone,
from the friable nature of the stone the ornaments
have lost their sharpness. This is otherwise a
building of much interest the interior of the hall
being lined with portraits of eminent characters
Two of the City gates are still remaining of the
same red stone - Many of the old picturesque
gabled houses remain in this City, these are contras-
ted by the rest which are built of brick of the
reddest colour. Ford Alms Houses for old
men & women is a very comfortable asylum &
the building itself is a good subject of the Domestic
architecture of that time the date being 1525 -
At 1/2 past 3 left Coventry by a stage for Daventry
which we reached at 7 p.m. having dined at the
Wheatheap where they have also good beds, we
left Daventry at 6 next morning being
Monday 18th for London having passed through
Market Street Redburn &c at 7 p.m. reached Islington
where we left the stage having had a pleasant
tour, an agreeable companion, & fine weather &
thank God, without any mishaps having befallen us, 18th

